Patterns of Commemoration in Montgomery's Afterlife: "We Are Not Anne of Green Gables; We Are L.M. Montgomery"

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Abstract: Public attention has recently shifted from focusing almost exclusively on *Anne of Green Gables* and Montgomery's other fictions to recognition of the author herself as a compelling historical figure, in line with the mandate of the Lucy Maud Montgomery Society of Ontario (LMMSO), who oversee and operate the Historic Leaskdale Manse, that "[w]e are not Anne of Green Gables; we are L.M. Montgomery."1 Montgomery is now honoured in a wide range of commemorative activities in the public sphere and enjoys a flourishing afterlife on the page and on the stage.

In 2007, Lorraine York described L.M. Montgomery's celebrity as secondary, "reflected" fame derived from Anne Shirley, her fictional creation that "has attained celebrity status in its own right." According to York, "Fans will tend to talk about Anne with greater frequency than they talk about Montgomery."2 I shared this orientation in my 2010 analysis of seven milestones that mark *Anne of Green Gables*'s route to becoming a cultural icon, in that my primary focus was on the publication, adaptations, and larger impact of the one book, with passing attention to the publication of Maud's journals and the development of L.M. Montgomery studies as an active scholarly area.3 While Anne has long been a major focus of tourist attention in PEI, nicely documented in Sarah Gothie's recent analysis of visitors' patterns of "Playing 'Anne'" replete with red braids and enactments of favourite aspects of their beloved childhood novel,4 this pattern has shifted during the past two decades. The engagement with Anne that continues to flourish in every possible medium and genre is now accompanied by an expanded focus on Montgomery as a person, due to growing attention to her rich self-documentation and to the broader range of her writing (as in the volumes of the L.M. Montgomery Library curated by Benjamin Lefebvre), along with ongoing interest in women's history and in expanding critical and cultural approaches.

Literary commemoration is a complicated enterprise, entwining authors and their works as well as involving numerous individuals, community organizations, jurisdictions, and levels of government.5 Outside of Canada, scholars have paid increasing attention to this complex field of inquiry, examining changing attitudes toward the cultural value of individual authors in relation to patterns of national identity, as demonstrated through the preservation and sanctification of sites and buildings with which they are associated. Nicola J. Watson's two volumes that document and analyze the growth and significance of British literary tourism over the course of the nineteenth century delve into "the wider cultural history of how literature is consumed, experienced, and projected within the individual reader's life, and within a readership more generally."6 In *Homes and Haunts*, Alison Booth expands the national dimensions of authorial veneration by discussing American literary pilgrims

and literary shrines alongside their European counterparts. According to Klara Szlezak, nationalism and the preservation of social class have been significant motives underlying the commemoration of cultural sites in the United States.[7]

In Canada, the documentation and researching of literary commemoration have followed different approaches from those prevailing in Britain and the United States. In the 1980s, two monumental geographical inventories of Canada's literary landscape assiduously mapped references to writers and to the settings of literary works, with little other analysis, in John Robert Colombo's *Canadian Literary Landmarks* (1984) and in Albert and Theresa Moritz's *The Oxford Illustrated Literary Guide to Canada* (1987). These were followed in 1998 by Denise Pérusse's *Pays littéraires du Québec*, which includes travel information in line with the support she received from that province's ministries of tourism and of culture and communications. Yet these landmark compilations have led to little analysis of Canada's larger literary heritage. Analytical studies of commemoration, mostly written by historians, deal primarily with events, sites, and figures from the country's military and political history rather than with those associated with literature and the arts.[8]

In my larger project on literary commemoration in Canada, "commemoration" refers to the cultivation of cultural memory by enhancing a sense of the past in the public sphere and often engages people who might not otherwise come into contact with the person being recognized. Such commemorative gestures include postage stamps, coins, parks, gardens, statues, museums, civic celebrations, plaques, and the names of public sites such as schools, libraries, streets, and mountains. I use the term "afterlife"—a word frequently employed by those who analyze cultural production[9]—primarily in relation to the enhancement of an author's legacy in more selective environments that involve adaptations, scholarship, and the arts, especially on the stage, the screen, and the page, including biographical interpretations and publications, novels, plays, and poems. While overlaps among these various forms of expression abound, distinctive patterns emerge that are specific to the individual writer.

The many forms of recognition associated with Montgomery present a rich context in which to explore the dimensions of a celebrated Canadian writer's public commemoration and ongoing afterlife. Her biography illustrates both sides of authorial veneration, as before she herself became an object of commemoration, she avidly participated in the literary tourism of her time. During her 1911 honeymoon in Scotland and England, Montgomery approached the Old World through its literary associations, especially in relation to the fiction and poetry of Walter Scott. In planning her journey "to see every notable place I've read about,"[10] Maud's available personal records do not tell us whether she consulted the proliferating guidebooks for British and American literary tourists described by Booth.[11] Other than taking a brief Cook's tour to Robbie Burns sites in Ayr and a Cook's excursion around Edinburgh, she managed her itinerary so that she could escape from "the chattering, exclaiming mob of tourists" as she visited the birthplaces, homes, monuments, and graves of Burns, Scott, William Wordsworth, Oliver Goldsmith, William Shakespeare, Charlotte Brontë, and John Milton, as well as Anne Hathaway's Cottage. She was surprised to find Milton's tomb in London "forgotten and neglected" rather than "as noted a shrine as Shakespeare's or Burns's," and while at Abbotsford, which was "filled by a chattering crowd," she presciently "wondered if Scott would have liked this—to see his home overrun by hordes of curious sight seers. I am sure I would not." Montgomery's preference during this journey, which would prove to be her only venture overseas, was to visit historic sites in relative solitude in order to "dream and muse," particularly enjoying places that "[reek] with romance and tragedy."[12] Not surprisingly, a similar approach to travel echoes in her journal entries regarding her 1922 vacation in Muskoka where she again sought solitude in order to indulge her imagination. Linda Rodenburg analyzes this approach in relation to John Urry's notion of the "tourist gaze" whereby the visitor differentiates between her own world of ordinary experience and the extraordinary qualities that she imputes to the places being visited;[13] in the words of Urry and Jonas Larsen, "what makes a particular tourist gaze depends upon what it is contrasted with."[14]

As evidenced in Montgomery's own travels, literary tourism usually blends sites associated with an author's life with those associated with the author's imaginative writings. Many current Montgomery-related commemorative sites and activities relate primarily to her fictions, such as the furnishing of the Macneill home as Green Gables to accord with the novel; others blend references to her life and her work (usually focusing on Anne) in a variety of genres and media. Examples include Deirdre Kessler's book *Green Gables: L.M. Montgomery's Favourite Places* (2001), which mingles photos from Maud's life with photos of museum displays concerning her fictions; Bala's Museum, which commemorates her 1922 visit to Muskoka while giving primary focus to Anne;15 and the new "Anne and Maud Experience," established in 2021, which promotes a self-driven car tour through Montgomery's biographical sites of Leaskdale and Zephyr.16 This route includes the Pickering Village Museum site where *Anne with an "E"* was filmed as well as murals recently painted on an outside wall of the Pickering Civic Centre that celebrate Anne and Maud together.17 Alongside the never-ending popularity and commercial value of Anne-related content, during recent decades an increasing number of such gestures relate directly to Montgomery's life with minimal reference to Anne, tracing places where the author lived, worked, studied, and visited. This essay "re-visions" Montgomery in relation to the growing trend to commemorate her identity publicly apart from her characters, involving various government and community efforts and through the creation of her afterlife in numerous posthumous formats, including biographies and fictional representations.

Forms of Public Commemoration

In the public sphere, Montgomery has been commemorated in a variety of formats generated by a wide range of sponsors. Canadian authors are most often recognized through initiatives arising from the desires of specific communities to honour esteemed figures in locally significant formats such as preserved buildings, plaques, and parks. For example, in 1992 the coincidence of Canada's 125th birthday with the 50th anniversary of Montgomery's death was marked by the Norval Community Association with a public celebration of the opening of their L.M. Montgomery Heritage Garden that also featured a large birthday cake for Canada.18

Local recognition in the form of names chosen for public sites by school boards, municipalities, and the like is often unpredictable. Given Montgomery's national popularity, it is surprising that no public library bears her name, whereas there are three Bibliothèques Gabrielle Roy in Quebec. In the educational realm, Montgomery also appears to be under-acknowledged. Her name appears in Montgomery Hall, the student residence that opened in 1961 at the former Prince of Wales College in Charlottetown (and now serves as college office space) 19 and two public schools—the L.M. Montgomery Elementary School in Charlottetown that opened in 1983 and the Lucy Maud Montgomery Public School in Scarborough, Ontario, that opened in 1989. In contrast, across Canada there are at least five schools named for Emily Carr and seven for Gabrielle Roy.20 Street names referencing Montgomery are also surprisingly sparse; the closest I have found is her appearance on a list of suggested new street names in Woodstock, Ontario (along with Margaret Atwood and Alice Munro).21 Given Montgomery's affinity for plants and flowers, it has taken a long time for her to be memorialized with parks and gardens, other than the inclusion of what is now Green Gables Heritage Place in Prince Edward Island National Park, which was largely about Anne until the 1990s, when Parks Canada expanded its focus to include the author.22 In Ontario, the first such site to reference Montgomery distinctly is the small park (originally designated a "parkette") near her final home in Toronto, whose 1983 plaque was updated and expanded in 2019. Her Norval residence includes the above-mentioned L.M. Montgomery Garden, which was later transformed into "The Children's Garden of the Senses" that opened in 2016.23 Most recent is the new L.M. Montgomery Park in Cavendish, which officially opened in 2019.

Statues are a hallowed form of public commemoration enjoyed by few writers in Canada other than Robbie Burns, so beloved of Scottish immigrants that there are at least seven replicas of him sprinkled across the country from Halifax to Victoria. Montgomery probably now tops the list of Canadian writers with three well-known statues,24 all by locally based sculptors. First was the bust by New Brunswick-based Acadian artist

Claude Roussel that now resides in the entry of UPEI's Robertson Library and was originally commissioned in 1964 for Prince of Wales College's aforementioned Montgomery Hall. In 2015, some fifty years later, it was followed by "Maud in the Garden" by Uxbridge sculptor Wynn Walters, created for the church garden at Leaskdale.[25] The new life-sized statue at the L.M. Montgomery Park in Cavendish, designed by Summerside artist Grace Curtis, was unveiled in 2019 when the existing Cavendish Heritage Park commemorating the area's early settlers was transformed into a Montgomery site with paths connecting to nearby places related to her life. While maintaining the park's original recognition of "the founding families of Cavendish: the MacNeils [*sic*], the Clarks and the Simpsons, who emigrated to Canada from Scotland in 1790,"[26] the renovations to highlight Montgomery demonstrate the current power of her cultural capital to shape the region's larger historical narrative. Publicly displayed portraits constitute a related form of recognition; Montgomery's only formal portrait seems to be "A Moment with Maud," by Arnold Hodgkins, commissioned by the Uxbridge-Scott Historical Society in 1974 to commemorate her one-hundredth birthday and now hanging in the hall of the Historic Leaskdale Manse.[27]

This increasing recognition of the historical Montgomery in the public sphere has largely resulted from local, community-generated efforts and has scarcely penetrated the federal level's widely disseminated commemorative formats of postage stamps and currency, where Anne has remained the primary focus. In 1994 (not a significant year for Anne or her author), the Royal Canadian Mint issued a $200 22-karat gold coin, priced at $399, with the image of "a young girl under a gazebo, daydreaming about the adventures of Anne of Green Gables" in the words of its publicity brochure.[28] In 2008, to celebrate Anne's centennial, the Mint issued an *Anne of Green Gables* "quarter" that was larger than a silver dollar and priced at $19.95; its initial edition sold out immediately. Canada Post marked 2008 with a pair of commemorative stamps (designed by Ben Stahl, who illustrated the covers of the Bantam editions of Montgomery's books) that focus entirely on Anne, with imagery that replicates the previous stamp of 1975. This earlier effort had supposedly commemorated the centennial of Montgomery's birth in 1874, yet it appeared a year too late and only depicted Anne, accompanied by the uninformative words "Lucy Maud / Montgomery / Anne of / Green / Gables / Anne de / Green / Gables."[29] The most recent attention to Montgomery at the federal level occurred in 2016, when the Bank of Canada launched its competition to select a significant woman to appear on the new ten-dollar bill that was won by Viola Desmond in 2019. Montgomery was on the penultimate shortlist of twelve but not on the final list of five.[30]

Alongside the usual commemorative formats of stamps, statues, currency, and names of public sites are unexpected gestures, some of which display a particularly Canadian valence. For thirty years, Montgomery's name identified a ferry that was acquired by the CNR in 1969 to serve various Atlantic routes before being sold to private interests,[31] a marine distinction that she shares with the Mohawk poet E. Pauline Johnson (Tekahionwake) whose name once graced a West Coast luxury yacht. Montgomery is one of the few Canadian writers to be recognized in a Heritage Minute, in company with poet John McCrae, author of "In Flanders Fields," and novelist Nellie McClung—albeit McClung is here presented as a suffragist rather than an author. Montgomery is also one of the few Canadian writers of sufficient stature to generate a named scholarly journal, putting the *Journal of L.M. Montgomery Studies* (founded in 2019) in league with *Margaret Atwood Studies* (founded in 2008; preceded by *The Newsletter of the Margaret Atwood Society*) and the *Margaret Laurence Review* (founded in 1991). Apart from these shared distinctions, Montgomery is the only English-language Canadian writer whose name is attached to a research institute (the L.M. Montgomery Institute [LMMI] founded in 1993 at the University of Prince Edward Island), or whose personal library and reading history are being carefully reconstructed (by Emily Woster, for the LMMI),[32] or whose life has been documented via her kitchen in Elaine and Kelly Crawford's *Aunt Maud's Recipe Book* (1996). These contrasting entities of scholarly research and domestic accomplishment nicely capture the range of interest currently generated by her life and writings.

Sites Associated with Montgomery's Life

In contrast to the formats considered thus far, commemorations of Montgomery's lived geography abound, amply illustrating Harald Hendrix's point that the transformations of writers' houses into monuments and museums "attract readers that feel the need to go beyond their intellectual exchanges with texts and long for some kind of material contact with the author of those texts or the places where they originate."[33] Tourist interest in sites associated with Montgomery began during her lifetime, primarily in relation to Anne. Shortly after the publication of *Anne of Green Gables*, a reporter from the Charlottetown *Guardian* set out to "visit Avonlea and Green Gables and take in the scenes of Miss Montgomery's famous novel."[34] At first, Montgomery was flattered when visitors to Cavendish explored such places as Lover's Lane, happily noting in her journal that "[t]he old lane is famous." On her 1911 honeymoon journey through old-world literary sites, she wanted to peer into writers' personal lives and was disappointed that at Haworth she "could not see the interior of the old Parsonage where [Charlotte Brontë] lived her strange life and wrote her compelling books." But as her fame increased, Montgomery's enthusiasm for popular attention paled. On the one hand, she was pleased to be "lionized" in literary circles such as the Canadian Authors Association, but on the other, she recoiled when the chattering hordes of tourists, from whom she had dissociated herself during her travels, invaded her personal geography. Whereas all the sites she had visited in England and Scotland concerned long-dead authors who were no longer troubled by invasions of privacy, Montgomery soon learned that for a living author, aggressive fans were a different matter. In 1923, when her uncle John Macneill tore down the deteriorating farmhouse that had been her home, she commented that people in Charlottetown were "indignant" at the destruction of the province's "only 'literary shrine.'" Yet she claimed not to mind, as "[i]t would not please me to think of it being overrun by hordes of curious tourists and carried off piecemeal." She regarded Cavendish's Anne-based burgeoning tourism of the 1920s, which included artificial sites such as "Avonlea Restaurant," as "desecration," a term she used again in 1936 after the "Anne of Green Gables" farmhouse was purchased for a National Park.[35]

During the decades after Montgomery's death, as the textual documentation of her life increased with the publication of her correspondence, selected journals, and Mary Rubio's long-awaited biography, *The Gift of Wings*, so too did recognition of her residences and other significant sites. No other Canadian author has been treated to such specific tracing of their geographical presence. In a country where writers are fortunate to be commemorated with occasional plaques and perhaps the preservation of one noted residence, Montgomery stands out. Her life and career are commemorated in nearly every place with which she has been associated, however briefly; for example, recently recognized is the building at Dalhousie University where she attended courses for a year in 1895–96.[36] In PEI and Ontario, the online tours and maps that assiduously trace her steps and associated literary references include the virtual tours created by Carolyn Strom Collins and Bernadeta Milewski.[37] Many of these sites make good use of social media, such as having their own Facebook groups.[38]

Decades after being named a National Historic Person in 1942, Montgomery became the only Canadian author to enjoy two "Historic Sites" designated as such by the Historic Sites and Monuments Board of Canada (HSMBC).[39] First was the Leaskdale Manse, her home from 1911 to 1926, which received HSMBC designation in 1997, well before the Cavendish National Historic Site, her second HSMBC recognition, was created in 2005 to link the foundations and grounds of her childhood home with the nearby "Green Gables" farmhouse that had belonged to Parks Canada since 1936, and to which an HSMBC cairn and plaque had been added in 1948.[40] Recent renovations further confirm the iconic significance of Anne Shirley, with the majestic Green Gables Heritage Place Visitors Centre, which opened in 2019, now including a "scrapbook style" outline of Montgomery's life.[41] As well, the Norval Manse, her home from 1926 to 1935, is in the process of becoming the Lucy Maud Montgomery Museum and Literary Centre and has published the first issue of its newsletter, *The L.M. Montgomery Norval Times*.[42]

Most of the Montgomery museums aspire to a sense of authenticity with period decor and furnishings, along with display items that were in her possession. Some highlight associations with her stories to the point that they "[collapse] the worlds of Montgomery and of fictional characters created by her," to cite Lefebvre's critique of Avonlea Village. To quote him further: "The name L.M. Montgomery, itself a trademark of Heirs of L.M. Montgomery Inc., is likewise a commodity that pushes to new limits Foucault's concept of the 'author function,' whereby the author becomes a cultural capital that develops, through cultural association, into an ideological entity separate from the actual individual who bears that name."[43] Notable in this regard is the Lucy Maud Montgomery Society of Ontario's differentiation between biography and fiction in their assertion that "Leaskdale is not a site associated with any particular fictional character. It is the place where the author actually lived for fifteen years, as minister's wife and mother and neighbour, and where she wrote fifteen of her novels. … We are not Anne of Green Gables; we are L.M. Montgomery."[44]

In PEI, Montgomery's birthplace in New London endured a fraught few decades as the small house passed through various hands before it was officially opened to the public on 1 July 1965.[45] It currently operates as a museum whose display includes a replica of Montgomery's wedding dress and some of her original scrapbooks. Although the Bideford school, the first place where Montgomery taught, is no longer standing, its site is marked by a 1977 cairn whose memorial inscription includes her name.[46] The nearby Bideford Parsonage, where she boarded in 1894–95, is now a museum promoted as an "Historical Residence of Island Author L.M. Montgomery" whose website invites her readers to "[v]isit the room with a view where the famous author of Anne of Green Gables, Lucy Maud Montgomery, was inspired to write."[47] Her second school, in Belmont, has been moved to the commercial/fantasy site of Avonlea Village, along with "the original Long River Presbyterian Church Lucy Maud attended with her Montgomery and Campbell cousins from Park Corner."[48] Her third school, in Lower Bedeque, where she taught in 1897–98, has been restored as a typical one-room schoolhouse, officially named the Lucy Maud Montgomery Lower Bedeque School. Its preservation was recently ensured when it was moved to the town of Central Bedeque to join the Bedeque Area Museum maintained by the Bedeque Area Historical Society.[49] In Ontario, the two-week vacation that Montgomery enjoyed in 1922 in Muskoka is commemorated in Bala's Museum where, among other Montgomery-related objects, her silver tea set is on display.[50] The Macdonalds' final home, "Journey's End" at 210 Riverside Drive in what was then the western end of Toronto, remains in private hands, recognized only by a plaque from the Toronto Historical Board in nearby Lucy Maud Montgomery Park. Missing from this inventory is on-site recognition of the teen-age year that Maud spent with her father in Prince Albert, Saskatchewan, in 1890–91. A photo of that now-demolished house survives at the University of Guelph,[51] but the only local recognition that I have found is several 2017 newspaper articles about Melanie Fishbane's visit to Prince Albert upon the publication of her book, *Maud*, followed by details in a 2021 column on local history.[52]

Montgomery's Afterlife: The Biographical Imperative

Alongside attention to her geographical associations, Montgomery's life has become an increasingly busy area of research and discussion. In her study of literary celebrity, Faye Hammill notes that "[i]n the earliest instance, [Montgomery] found herself being reinvented in Anne's image: journalists and publicists projected onto the author the qualities they discerned in the heroine, notably wholesomeness, youthful modesty, and identification with a rural environment," while "different periodicals appropriated her into different ideologies, such as cultural nationalism, regionalism, Protestant ethics, and literary idealism."[53] In a similar vein, E. Holly Pike finds that during Montgomery's lifetime, the image created by her publishers' marketing strategy "was to present her as a suitable companion and guide for the young women and girls who were her readers."[54] Given this orientation, it is not surprising that the first biographical summaries tended to follow the success arc of Montgomery's self-representation in 1917 in *The Alpine Path*. During her lifetime, Maud's story was generally cast as a reflection of Anne's, itself a modification of the Jane Eyre trope of the lonely orphan who finally reaches "the City of

Fulfillment," to cite the last words of *The Alpine Path*.[55]

After Montgomery's death, emerging biographical details began to complicate earlier narratives. Volumes relating to her biography appeared long before creative works about her, most of which would reinforce the compelling nature of Montgomery's documented history by obeying a biographical imperative. In general, the pattern of these biographical narratives varies according to the age of their intended audience—whether adult or juvenile.

During the middle decades of the twentieth century, biographical materials prepared for adult readers were remarkably sparse, reflecting the prevailing perspective that Montgomery was essentially a children's author who merited little serious attention.[56] Other than Wilfred Eggleston's edition of Montgomery's early letters to Ephraim Weber, issued as *The Green Gables Letters* in 1960, and the pamphlet of recollections printed by the Women's Association of Leaskdale in 1965, significant biographical publications did not appear until the centennial of Montgomery's birth in 1974. The years 1973 to 1975 saw the first book version of *The Alpine Path* , Francis Bolger's *The Years Before "Anne*," and the published findings of biographer Mollie Gillen, first in a 1973 *Chatelaine* article, then in her 1975 book, *The Wheel of Things*. Gillen's use of Montgomery's correspondence with Weber and with George MacMillan (which Gillen had the great fortune to rescue from likely destruction by one of his relatives), alongside the first references to the journals by the creators of the CBC documentary *Lucy Maud Montgomery: The Road to Green Gables* (1975), darkened the adult narrative to that of the tragic artist—the troubled woman whose writings masked her own difficulties and whose last days were spent in despair. (Might we describe this as the Virginia Woolf trope?)

During the 1980s, the textual landscape of Montgomery's afterlife altered significantly with the appearance of her selected letters to MacMillan in *My Dear Mr. M* (1980) along with the first volumes of her *Selected Journals* in 1984 and 1987.[57] The 1990s saw a surge of biographically based publications for both adult and young readers as well as several coffee-table books with stunning photos that capture Montgomery's geographical settings and reflect her visual sensibility, such as Bolger's *Spirit of Place: Lucy Maud Montgomery and Prince Edward Island* (1982), Nancy Rootland's *Anne's World, Maud's World: The Sacred Sites of L.M. Montgomery* (1996), and Kessler's previously mentioned *Green Gables: Lucy Maud Montgomery's Favourite Places*. However, Rubio's 2008 biography essentially marked the end of biographically oriented volumes aimed at adults—albeit not the end of biographical concerns, as evidenced in Rubio's important 2013 postscript essay, "Uncertainties Surrounding the Death of L.M. Montgomery."

Possibly because it was widely known that Rubio's book was in progress, most books with biographical content issued during the decade and a half before 2008 appear to complement this forthcoming biography rather than trying to cover the full story of Montgomery's complicated life. This list includes Rubio and Elizabeth Waterston's *Writing a Life* (1994, in ECW's *Canadian Biography* series); the 1996 CBC documentary *The Many Mauds* in its *Life and Times* series; the Huttons' *Lucy Maud Montgomery and Bala* (1998); Kevin McCabe and Alexandra Heilbron's monumental *L.M. Montgomery Album* (1999) and Heilbron's follow-up volume, *Remembering L.M. Montgomery* (2001); the Tiessens' edition of Montgomery's later letters to Weber (2006); Irene Gammel's edition of Montgomery and Nora Lefurgey's joint 1903 diary in *The Intimate Life of L.M. Montgomery* (2005); Deborah Quail's documentary volume *L.M. Montgomery: The Norval Years, 1926–1935* (2006); and Elizabeth Epperly's edition of the *Island Scrapbooks* (2008). Indeed, the only notable adult-oriented full-length biographical narrative published after Rubio's book is Jane Urquhart's eloquent personal discussion in her 2009 contribution to Penguin Canada's *Extraordinary Canadians* series, which presents an impressionistic and speculative conversation with previous biographical sources.

Since 2010, biographical concerns have largely shifted from interpretative works to primary sources with the 2012 appearance of the first volumes of Maud's *Complete Journals*, seven of which are now available. An

important addition to the Montgomery archive will be Mary Beth Cavert's edition, currently in the works, of the complete MacMillan correspondence. Podcasts now contribute a new medium (but not necessarily new content) to the range of biographical treatments, as some of the MaudCasts from the LMMI concern Montgomery's life.[58] Independently from the community of Montgomery researchers and devotees clustered around the LMMI, a pair of admirers from Owen Sound has recuperated Montgomery as a "feminist icon of her time"[59] in their recent podcast series *Maud: Books, Babes and Barbiturates*. Their focus on mental health and drug addiction (which is greatly indebted to Rubio), along with a 2020 article on "L.M. Montgomery's Agonizing Drug Addiction" in *Maclean's* and the recent launch of the "L.M. Montgomery and Mental Health" collection from the *Journal of L.M. Montgomery Studies*, bring Montgomery directly into this new context which is currently of great concern in Canada.[60]

A different pattern characterizes the proliferation of biographies for younger readers that began in 1956. This genre has largely been shaped by publishers' interests, starting with Hilda Ridley's *The Story of L.M. Montgomery*, which drew heavily on *The Alpine Path*. Described on the front flap of its dust jacket as the "first biography of L.M. Montgomery, author of the immortal *Anne of Green Gables*, ever to appear in book form,"[61] this volume was issued by Ryerson Press, which in 1942 had become Montgomery's first Canadian publisher. Following standard practice, Ryerson's editions of Montgomery's novels were carefully listed on the back of the dust jacket of their author's biography. Harrap, Ridley's British co-publisher, also engaged in promotion with an inserted "Publisher's Postscript" reminding readers that this firm had been Montgomery's major publisher outside of North America since 1924.[62] In 1992, Harry Bruce's *Maud: The Life of L.M. Montgomery*[63] was similarly packaged by Bantam Seal to establish continuity with their editions of her novels, again listed on the back of the dust jacket. Bruce maintained Ridley's positive perspective by highlighting Montgomery's romantic life and essentially concluding with the success of *Anne of Green Gables*. Other biographical works with upbeat endings, such as Michael F. Hennessey's play *Young Maud* (staged in 1990) and Janet Lunn's *Maud's House of Dreams* (2002), close with a similarly happy take on Montgomery's engagement or marriage.

Most of Montgomery's juvenile biographies have appeared in publishers' series focusing on historically significant people or events or both and are therefore formatted according to the series' established conventions, usually paper-bound with bright covers featuring youthful portraits that reproduce familiar photos of Maud or artists' versions thereof. Many that recognize Montgomery's difficulties follow the Jane Eyre trope of triumph over adversity; to quote Jacqueline Langille's 1992 treatment in the *Famous Canadians* series from Four East Publications of Nova Scotia, "Through all her years of troubles, with court cases, accidents, sickness, and Ewan's melancholy, Maud's writing spirit triumphed. She published eight books between 1926 and 1936, none of which betrayed her inner sorrows."[64] Other narratives more directly acknowledge Montgomery's distress, beginning with Gillen's 1978 juvenile account, included for decades in Fitzhenry and Whiteside's *The Canadians* series, which details her difficulties with Ewan during her last years "on a downhill path."[65] From the 1990s onward, as new volumes of the published journals revealed more information about Montgomery's troubled private life, authors selected aspects of her difficulties that would be appropriate for adolescent readers such as her conflicts with Page, Ewan's car accident, and Maud's declining health,[66] while generally eschewing mental illness and drug addition. Their tone is sometimes foreboding: Stan Sauerwein's 2004 account of Montgomery's "Incredible Life" in the *Amazing Stories* series, originally published by Altitude and now issued by Formac Lorimer, opens, "She was born under a dark star and destined to walk a hard path."[67] In the same vein, Charis Cotter's Montgomery chapter in Annick Press's *Born to Write* (2008) begins with the poisoning of the little girl's kitten, an episode taken from the middle of *The Alpine Path*, and concludes, "In her books, Maud created the world the way she wanted it to be. In her life she didn't have that kind of control."[68] Other biographies that focus on authorship, such as Marylou Kjelle's 2005 volume in the *Who Wrote That* series from Chelsea House in Philadelphia and Alexandra Wallner's *Lucy Maud Montgomery: The Author of Anne of Green Gables* (2006), tend to be less dramatic and often include details about the pragmatics of publishing.

The last fifteen years have seen a curious divergence in juvenile biographies. On the one hand, we now have several engaging chapter books aimed at adolescents, notably Liz Rosenberg's *House of Dreams: The Life of L.M. Montgomery* (2018), "the first biography of L.M. Montgomery for young readers to include recent revelations about the author's last days and to encompass the complexity of a brilliant and checkered life,"[69] and Fishbane's *Maud* (2017). Categorized as fiction, *Maud* enriches the documented course of Montgomery's adolescence and fraught year in Prince Albert by probing her emotions and her choices. While several juvenile biographies had been translated into French, the first to be written originally in that language appeared in Montreal in 2020: Josée Ouimet's *Lucy Maud Montgomery: Écrivaine*, in a history series aimed at ten-year-olds. Overtly feminist, Ouimet's book concludes with an appendix outlining "*Les droits des femmes à l'époque de* Lucy Maud Montgomery."[70] During the same period, Montgomery also began to appear in formats that address very young or marginal readers, the latter aimed at struggling readers or adult learners in incarnations, such as Ann Dublin's *L.M. Montgomery: A Writer's Life* (2005) in Pearson Canada's *Canadian Biographies (Reaching Readers)* series and Terry Barber's brief 2011 account in *The Maple Leaf* series from Grass Roots Press, a division of Literacy Services Canada. Beginning readers can now glimpse Maud's story in the inspirational *little people big dreams* series (2018), as well as in the first level of the familiar *I Can Read* series (2019.)[71]

Creative Treatments

Many prominent Canadian writers—including Margaret Laurence, Margaret Atwood, Jean Little, Alice Munro, Heather O'Neill, and Louise Penny—warmly credit their youthful reading of Montgomery's books as a source of inspiration,[72] yet none have written about her in their own creative work. In the genres of fiction and drama, Montgomery's textual afterlife stays close to the biographical record, sometimes realizing Maud through her own words, as with Conrad Boyce's one-woman play, *Maud of Leaskdale*, whose script is taken entirely from her journals in recognition of the power and fluency of her personal voice. Since its premiere in 2011, this play has been performed continually by Jennifer Carroll under the sponsorship of the L.M. Montgomery Society of Ontario. Montgomery's dramatic appeal also underpins the Spirit of Maud Theatre Company, based in Norval and run by Marion Abbott, who is now working on *Maud the Musical*, which enjoyed a staged reading in October 2022.[73]

Some creative works torque toward Montgomery's love life, as with Hennessey's play *Young Maud*, whose heroine speaks more like a young woman of 1990 than of 1890. Others ambitiously try to include most episodes of her documented life, as in *The Nine Lives of L.M. Montgomery* (2008) by Leo Marchildon and Adam-Michael James. Authors of fictions about other Canadian women writers such as Pauline Johnson, Emily Carr, and Susanna Moodie have fabricated undocumented lovers, fictitious travels, and unlikely literary encounters.[74] However, creative writings about Montgomery have invented little more than crediting her cat Daffy with the publication of *Anne of Green Gables* after he is found hiding in the hatbox containing the forgotten manuscript, as narrated in Lynn Manuel's delightful picture book, *Lucy Maud and the Cavendish Cat* (1997). Funniest is the episode of *Murdoch Mysteries* in which comedian Danny Harris, in the role of George Crabtree, tries to persuade Montgomery that rather than write a story about a girl, she should treat the public to the gothic adventures of a boy known as "Dan of Green Gables."[75] Otherwise, the modifications are mild, as when Fishbane's *Maud* identifies Edie Skelton, the student boarder who shared Maud's room in Prince Albert, as a Métisse who understands Cree—an addition within the realm of historical possibility, given that Edie's mother remains unidentified.[76] Less authentic is Hennessey's addition of a fictional event in *Young Maud* when Herman Leard visits the Montgomery home in Cavendish. Innovation can be movingly effective, as when Don Hannah's 1994 play, *The Wooden Hill*, brings Maud's childhood imaginary friend, "Katie Maurice," onstage as a young girl who never grows up and serves as an alter ego for the adult Montgomery.

The YA novels that approach Maud through invented peripheral characters do not alter or augment her story. Youthful fictional adolescent girls meet Montgomery during her last years in Toronto in Bernice Thurman

Hunter's *As Ever, Booky* (1985) and Mary Frances Coady's *Lucy Maud and Me* (1999). More innovative is Marianne Jones's adult novel, *Maud and Me* (2021) about an artist struggling with her situation as a minister's wife in a small northern Ontario town during the 1970s and 1980s. Unpredictable visits from Montgomery's ghost, who offers wry comments and advice in Maud's own words taken from her journals, aid the narrator in successfully resolving her various conflicts. The most recent contribution to Montgomery's afterlife in fiction is Logan Steiner's *After Anne: A Novel of L.M. Montgomery's Life* (2023) which aims to fill some of the gaps in Montgomery's biography. Consciously shaping her journals for publication, this Maud burns many pages as well as letters, including her correspondence with her beloved cousin, Frede Campbell. In a central fictional episode in which Maud celebrates her thirty-third birthday following the acceptance of *Anne* for publication, Steiner effectively brings to life several significant figures, including Maud's grandmother, her cousin Frede, and her husband Ewan Macdonald. Steiner also gives Maud inner conversations with Anne that enrich the relationship between the author and her best-known character.77

Although Montgomery considered her poetry a significant component of her career and would have been thrilled to know that in Project Bookmark she is represented by a poem,78 few poets have responded to her in verse and no major Canadian writer has engaged with her in a dedicated volume such as Atwood's *The Journals of Susanna Moodie* (1970) or Joan Crate's *Pale as Real Ladies: Poems for Pauline Johnson* (1991). The closest work of this nature to appear in English is Anne Compton's poignant six-poem "Suite for L.M. Montgomery," which was published in the *Dalhousie Review* in 1985 and concludes with Maud's yearning for Frede.79 In 2018, a young Finnish writer, Vappu Kannas, published a 93-page volume of poems about Montgomery whose title, *Morsian*, means "The Bride," that has not yet been translated into English.80 Montgomery's fantasy figure of Katie Maurice, who might be expected to appeal to creative writers, reappears in Rosalee Peppard Lockyer's 2022 poem "My Maud by Katie Maurice," issued as a free-standing book and illustrated with colourized photos from the Montgomery archives. Representing Maud through the voice of her childhood imaginary friend, Lockyer offers a fresh lyrical perspective on Montgomery's creative imagination. Less direct is *In L.M.'s Garden* (2002), a "collection of short poems, haiku, haiga, sketches, and photography" that was "dedicated to the memory of L.M. Montgomery" by six contributors who engaged with Maud's sensibility by spending "an afternoon in the Lucy Maud Montgomery Memorial Garden, and the Willow Park Ecology Centre, in Norval."81 Montgomery would likely have enjoyed this book's appreciation of nature in its attention to details of plants and insects. Less pastoral are two recent single poems that address the doubleness/duplicity of her existence. Sara Peters's "Your Life as Lucy Maud Montgomery" (2013) explores how Anne, the much-loved orphan, took over her author's life armed with a butterfly knife—which, despite its innocent name, is a kind of switchblade banned in many places.82 Kat Cameron's 2014 poem, simply titled "L.M.M.," concludes in ambiguity by contrasting Montgomery's nostalgia for an idealized past with the troubles revealed in her journals, which may or may not disclose "[t]he secrets we never reveal."83

The poems written about Montgomery all focus far more on Maud than on their authors. In contrast, outside the mainstream genres of fiction, drama, biography, and poetry, as well as the rapidly growing genre of fanfiction described by Balaka Basu in the *Children and Childhoods in L.M. Montgomery: Continuing Conversations* collection, lie two recent books motivated by their authors' fervent desire to engage with Montgomery on a more personal level. While readers' identification with Anne (or Emily, or other characters) has long been a significant component of Montgomery's reception, fans' direct identification with Maud signals a new development in her afterlife, in a genre that can be best characterized as "self-help." The better of the two, Lorilee Craker's *Anne of Green Gables, My Daughter and Me: What My Favorite Book Taught Me about Grace, Belonging and the Orphan in Us All* (2015), explores the stories of both Anne and Maud to come to terms with her personal experience as an adoptee who later contacted her birth family, followed by her subsequent adoption of a daughter from Korea. Through her sense of connection with Maud, Craker probes her own life in parallel with her analysis of Montgomery's use of Anne to resolve her personal issues of loss and need for parental love,

especially in *Anne of the Island*. Craker's dedication to this approach included a family trip to PEI and a visit with eighty-four-year-old Jennie Macneill to receive her first-hand description of Montgomery's last days and funeral. Altogether, this author's combination of textual and material experiences results in an engaging instance of self-engendered bibliotherapy. The same cannot be said of Robert V. Smith's *Modern Messages from Green Gables on Loving, Living, and Learning* (2021), which contains several pages commending Montgomery and Anne as examples of resilience and commitment to community that pertain today, and hundreds more that recount Maud's biography and Anne's story without adding to what has already been said by acknowledged Montgomery scholars such as Rubio, Gammel, and Lefebvre. Indeed, this strange book omits much that should have been included, such as Montgomery's self-representation in her journals and the significance of Emily as a reflection of her creator's experience of authorship.

Conclusion: Continuing Afterlives

Whereas commemorative gestures taper off with many writers as their appeal diminishes over time, the opposite seems to be the case with Montgomery, whose afterlife continues to expand in new directions. Some of these recent developments were to be anticipated, such as the enhancement of primary material with the publication of her *Complete Journals* and of editions of her correspondence, as well as further research into individuals who touched her life. Others have been less expected, such as the proliferation of biographies for younger readers and the personal "self-help" approach recently adopted by several adult fans. New books, such as John Passfield's announced fiction, *L.M. Montgomery: I Gave You Life*, will further augment interpretations of her life.84 Moreover, we can anticipate that electronic and social media formats such as websites, Facebook groups, and podcasts, which have already added to her profile, will continue to flourish as innovative technologies and new theoretical perspectives inspire fresh approaches to be taken by future readers, scholars, and fans.

About the Author: Dr. Carole Gerson (FRSC) is Professor Emerita in the Department of English at Simon Fraser University. She has published extensively on Canada's literary and cultural history with a focus on early Canadian women writers, from well-known figures such as Pauline Johnson and L.M. Montgomery to more obscure figures who can be found in her two databases: Canada's Early Women Writers (https://cwrc.ca/project/canadas-early-women-writers) and the more inclusive Database of Canada's Early Women Writers (https://dhil.lib.sfu.ca/doceww/). A member of the editorial team of the foundational *History of the Book in Canada / Histoire du livre et de l'imprimé au Canada* (2007), she was co-editor of vol. 3 (1918–1980). In 2011, she received the Gabrielle Roy Prize for Canadian criticism for *Canadian Women in Print, 1750–1918*, followed in 2013 by the Marie Tremaine medal from the Bibliographical Society of Canada. Her most recent book, co-authored with Peggy Lynn Kelly, is *Hearing More Voices: English-Canadian Women in Print and on the Air, 1914–1960* (Ottawa: Tecumseh Press, 2020). Over the years, she has been a grateful recipient of research support from SSHRC, as well as funding from the CFI and a Killam Research Fellowship.

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Banner Image: Courtesy of Weiqi Tang. Images of statues at Leaskdale Manse National Historic Site, Uxbridge, ON; UPEI Robertson Library, Charlottetown, PE; Montgomery Park, Cavendish, PE.

- 1 Quoted in Bode and Clement, "Montgomery's" 280.

- 2 York, *Literary Celebrity* 76–77.
- 3 Gerson, “Seven Milestones.”
- 4 Gothie, “Playing ‘Anne.’”
- 5 For an overview of Canadian literary commemoration, see Gerson, “Plaques and Persons.”
- 6 Watson, *Literary Tourist* 8. Also see her edited volume, *Literary Tourism and Nineteenth-Century Culture*.
- 7 Szlezak, *“Canonized”* 43–46.
- 8 Examples include Nicole Neatby and Peter Hodgins, eds., *Settling and Unsettling Memories*, U of Toronto P, 2012; Margaret Conrad, et al., *Canadians and Their Pasts*, U of Toronto P, 2013; and Celia Morgan, *Commemorating Canada: History, Heritage, and Memory, 1850s–1990s*, U of Toronto P, 2016.
- 9 Among many examples are Ann Rigney, *The Afterlives of Walter Scott: Memory on the Move*, Oxford UP, 2012, and Gillian Dow and Clare Hansen, eds., *Uses of Austen: Jane’s Afterlives*, Palgrave Macmillan, 2012.
- 10 Montgomery, *My Dear Mr. M* 58.
- 11 Booth, *Homes and Haunts* 34–38.
- 12 Montgomery, *CJ* 3 (30 July 1911): 7, 11; *CJ* 3 (18 Sept. 1911): 37; *CJ* 3 (6 Aug. 1911): 13; *CJ* 3 (20 July 1911): 6; *CJ* 3 (13 Aug. 1911): 20.
- 13 Rodenburg, “Bala” 207.
- 14 Urry and Larsen, *Tourist* 3.
- 15 See Rodenburg 215–18.
- 16 Montgomery is not yet the subject of commercial author destination tours such as the bus tour of Louise Penny sites put on by Travac Tours of Ottawa: https://www.travactours.com/quebec-on-the-trail-of-louise-penny/.
- 17 “New Pickering Murals Celebrate ‘Anne of Green Gables’ author Lucy Maud Montgomery,” *Peterborough Examiner*, 3 December 2023, https://www.thepeterboroughexaminer.com/local-pickering/life/2022/12/03….
- 18 Norval, “L.M. Montgomery Canada 125 Celebration.”
- 19 My thanks to Simon Lloyd, at the Robertson Library UPEI, for his informative email of 2 August 2021 concerning the bust of Montgomery and Prince of Wales College.
- 20 “Gabrielle Roy.”
- 21 Saylors, “Female Artists.”
- 22 de Jonge, “Through” 253.
- 23 Lucy Maud Montgomery Children’s Garden of the Senses.
- 24 A life-sized statue by PEI artist Terry Dunton Stevenson was displayed for years in the welcome centre at Gateway Village in Borden-Carleton after the 1997 opening of the Confederation Bridge. Its current location is unknown.
- 25 Dillon, “Lucy Maud.”
- 26 Steep, “Park.”
- 27 See https://lucymaudmontgomery.ca/resources/artifacts-and-collections/.
- 28 Gerson, “Seven” 30.
- 29 When the first Canadian translation into French was published in 1986, its title referred to Green Gables as “la maison aux pignons verts.”
- 30 For the list of twelve, see https://www.cbc.ca/news/politics/iconic-woman-bank-note-shortlist-1.355… and for the final shortlist, see https://www.cbc.ca/news/business/women-short-list-bank-note-1.3865563. In my view, the Bank gathered enough prominent names for a new series of notes featuring a selection of Canadian women who were important in many areas, which would have been preferable to setting up a competitive atmosphere for the recognition of just one.
- 31 Stena Danica.

- 32 “The L.M. Montgomery Bookshelf,” https://kindredspaces.ca/bookshelf. This project comprises books that Montgomery is known to have read. It differs from the Mordecai Richler project at Concordia (https://richlerlibrary.ca/) that includes all the books Richler owned at the time of his death, many of which appear to have been untouched and may have been given to him by authors or publishers without any selection or commitment on his part.
- 33 Hendrix, “Introduction” 1.
- 34 “Miss Katie Irving” 15.
- 35 Montgomery, *CJ* 2 (1 Aug. 1909): 236; *CJ* 3 (27 Aug. 1911): 28; *CJ* 7 (27 Nov. 1931): 204; *CJ* 5 (4 Aug. 1923): 167; *CJ* 6 (17 Sept. 1929): 278; *SJ* 5 (15 Oct. 1936): 100.
- 36 Morrison, “A Look Back.”
- 37 Collins and Milewski created guides for Prince Edward Island (https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=euiwzpTHPdk) and for Ontario (https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Grs9VeBqGUA). Online guides to Montgomery sites in PEI include https://lmmontgomery.ca/montgomerys-pei-map-island-sites-related-author and https://lmmontgomeryliterarytour.com/inspiring-places/. Ontario guides include https://discoveruxbridge.ca/lucy-maud/ and https://www.anneofgreengables.com/blog-posts/take-a-virtual-tour-of-l-m….
- 38 See, for example, the L.M. Montgomery Heritage Society (https://www.facebook.com/LMMontgomeryHeritageSociety/) and the Lucy Maud Montgomery Society of Ontario (https://www.facebook.com/LMMontgomerySO/).
- 39 Gerson, “Plaques and Persons.”
- 40 de Jonge 253.
- 41 Green Gables Visitor Centre.
- 42 Russell, “Ontario Manse”; see also https://www.facebook.com/lmmheritage.
- 43 Lefebvre, “‘Small’” 1122–23.
- 44 Quoted in Bode and Clement 280. Montgomery wrote eleven books (not fifteen) at Leaskdale, as confirmed by the LMMSO’s own website: https://lucymaudmontgomery.ca/resources/.
- 45 Johnstone, *Lucy Maud* 23–27.
- 46 A photo attributed to Gary Wood appears in McCabe, *Lucy Maud Montgomery Album* 101.
- 47 https://bidefordparsonagemuseum.com/
- 48 Avonlea Village.
- 49 Bedeque Area Historical Museum.
- 50 Bala’s Museum.
- 51 See https://images.ourontario.ca/uoguelph/details.asp?ID=26147.
- 52 Harrison, “When”; Lozinski, “Canada’s”; Payton, “Museum.”
- 53 Hammill, *Women* 100–01.
- 54 Pike, “Mass Marketing” 245.
- 55 Montgomery, *Alpine* 96.
- 56 Kelly and Gerson, *Hearing* 44; Clement et al., introduction 11–14.
- 57 Rather than my citing full bibliographical references for all the titles mentioned in this and the subsequent paragraph, I recommend consulting *L.M. Montgomery Online*, the amazingly inclusive and up-to-date bibliography maintained by Benjamin Lefebvre: https://lmmonline.org/
- 58 See https://themaudcast.podbean.com/. Examples include “MaudCast S01E09: Jenny Litster and L.M. Montgomery’s Cultural Contexts”; “MaudCast S01E11: Mary Beth Cavert and L.M. Montgomery’s Life and Letters”; and “MaudCast S02E03: Melanie Fishbane and Images of Montgomery as an Author.”
- 59 MacLennan and Drummond, episode 1, 29 November 2021.
- 60 Mitchell, “L. M. Montgomery’s”; https://journaloflmmontgomerystudies.ca/lmm-mental-health.
- 61 Ridley, *Story* (Ryerson edition).

- 62 W.G.H., “Publisher’s Postscript.”
- 63 In the book’s Nimbus edition of 2003, retitled *Maud: The Early Years of L.M. Montgomery*, the chapters are reorganized to better reflect the chronology of Montgomery’s life, but the text is unchanged.
- 64 Langille, *Lucy Maud* 37. For a similar conclusion see MacLeod, *Lucy Maud Montgomery: A Writer’s Life*.
- 65 Gillen, *Lucy Maud* 60.
- 66 For example, Langille describes Montgomery’s distress about the First World War, Ewan’s car accident, and her difficulties with Page; MacLeod describes her declining physical health as well as her problems with Ewan and with Page.
- 67 Sauerwein, *Lucy Maud* 13.
- 68 Cotter, *Born* 36.
- 69 Rosenberg, *House* front flap of dust jacket.
- 70 Ouimet, *Lucy Maud* 82–83.
- 71 Sánchez Vegara, *L.M. Montgomery*; Howden, *Lucy Maud*.
- 72 Clement and Steffler, “Preface” 277–78.
- 73 See https://lucymaudmontgomery.ca/2022/08/17/maud-of-leaskdale/ and https://www.marionabbott.com/theatre/maudthemusical.
- 74 For example, in Linda Wikene Johnson’s novel *Vancouver!* (2002), Carr and Johnson meet several times; in Cecily Ross’s novel *The Lost Diaries of Susanna Moodie* (2017), Moodie meets Mary Shelley; in James W. Nichol’s CBC radio series *The Secret Life of Susanna Moodie* (1984), Moodie has an affair with Brian the Still Hunter; Susan Vreeland’s novel *The Forest Lover* (2004) gives Carr a lover; in her radio play *Pauline Johnson: The Concert She Never Gave*, Erika Ritter sends Johnson to California where she meets several lovers.
- 75 *Murdoch Mysteries*, season 9, episode 12, “Unlucky in Love,” https://murdochmysteries.fandom.com/wiki/Unlucky_In_Love. See Bode, “Vulnerable” 68.
- 76 Fishbane, *Maud* 168.
- 77 Better editing would have removed this book’s anachronisms, as when Ewan addresses his future wife as “Ms. Montgomery” (45, 48, 49).
- 78 https://www.projectbookmarkcanada.ca/bookmarks-21-25#21-the-gable-window
- 79 Compton, “Suite” 784–89.
- 80 https://www.ntamo.net/product/877/vappu-kannas-morsian-2018.
- 81 Alexander, *In L.M.’s Garden* iii, 32.
- 82 Peters, “Your Life” 55–56.
- 83 Cameron, “L.M.M.” 16 (*Literary Review*).
- 84 http://johnpassfield.ca/NOVEL_-_MONTGOMERY.html

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